

provided the said number of delegates shall at no time exceed ninety.

Mr. BLAKISTONE. The gentleman thinks I will assent to that. Now, I believe the gentleman does not believe I will.

Mr. BRENT, of Baltimore city. I want to have this a settled point, whether we have few or many representatives, that they shall each have two. If the gentleman is going to fix upon 102 as his basis, then you will have to fix a small number as the basis.

Mr. BLAKISTONE. Now, I would not like to have much of an increase over the present number, but I would rather have it reduced, provided, that when we are reducing, we take care not to overlook the various interests, and satisfy all portions of the State that we are disposed to do equal justice. For what purpose was government established? Was it that men should get together and cheat each other? It was for no such purpose. It was not intended that one portion of the State should grasp all the power and prevent the other in interest from having any participation in the government. The gentleman asks me whether I would subscribe to his proposition; and I say I cannot. Twenty-four, I think, is his number. He has understood what I said before about giving each county two. After having done that, you establish as the basis of representation, the number of twenty-five thousand. And, after the first delegates, you allow a fraction to each county; and after that, apply the principle to the whole State. Will the gentleman subscribe to that? Now, take the fraction all through. Here is a basis, and here is a principle which might be made to work for years to come. But the gentleman says he will not stop one iota short of representation according to population in the lower House. If every man thinks of holding on to his own individual opinion, how are we, under any circumstances, to establish a Constitution? It cannot be done; for, out of one hundred and three members, each and every one has an opinion of his own, which he would prefer to any thing else; and it is utterly impossible, I say, under those circumstances, for a majority ever to agree, unless they would agree to meet on some ground where all can stand. Well, sir, it won't do to take population exclusively. The gentleman from Baltimore says he will not agree to territory and population, as I proposed. You cannot get representation according to taxation. That would not be right; and I cannot, for the life of me, imagine any plan that is more feasible, more equitable, more just and more likely to command a majority of the votes of the Convention than what I suggested—that is, a territorial basis for so many, and then some based on representation according to population, by which the more populous portions of the State will be entitled to a larger representation than the smaller counties. By giving two in the first instance you make all the counties equal, on the acknowledged territorial basis, then by adopting the principle of which I spoke, you equalise the representation throughout the State.

Sir, I want to know what it is has brought this

wonderful change over Maryland. In 1830, the disproportion between the counties was equally as great as it is now. I do not know but what it was greater; for in 1830 Carroll county had not been carved out of that very pure county, you, [Mr. Buchanan,] represent, sir, and Frederick, which is represented by the father of the Reform Convention. I say that the disproportion between the large and small counties at that time, was, perhaps, greater than it is now; for according to my recollection Caroline county had a much smaller population than now. I think she is improving; she has increased to about nine thousand in population. We heard no clamor, then, about representation according to population, and I cannot imagine any thing that has brought about this change, except it be "the cohesive power of public plunder." Mr. Calhoun said, he supposed it was that which kept parties together; and in every direction we see that men are fighting for office, and each party wants to get the better of the other. And that is what has brought you and I here, as sure as you live. He desired not to be misunderstood. He would not intimate that you or himself could be influenced by any other than the loftiest patriotism; we have not yet arrived at that period of life when political aspirations run highest, and sometimes run men mad. He desired not to be understood as making any personal application of his remarks to any honorable member of that body. He was willing to concede to them all that he claimed for himself. Least of all did he desire that his remarks should apply to the great body of the people. But he would tell you to whom he did mean them to apply. He meant them to apply to such persons whenever and wherever, they may be found, who having a total absence in themselves of personal and moral worth, yet desired political preferment. And who sought to attain office, or a quasi political distinction, (by means of adventitious appliances,) to which they had no real merit to entitle them. If there be any such here, which he would by no means intimate, or elsewhere, to such and such only was his remarks intended to apply.

If, sir, it was, as in the good old times, when religion did not divide men—when politics did not divide men—when they were all fighting shoulder to shoulder on the same side, take my word for it, there would be no occasion for calling a Convention together, and thus create a scramble among politicians for the spoils of office. Well, I hope if a change should take place, that many of my personal friends may be gratified and be elevated. I want that we should go to work to make a Constitution, without looking to our individual selves, but only to the good of the people of the State at large. Take my word for it, if we did that, we would make a more symmetrical Constitution. But, unfortunately we are all of us more or less ambitious; and we have this man and that man's notions to gratify. We have an innumerable variety of schemes and plans and opinions, and we have to put them all in a cauldron, and they have to boil and boil, in order to get something out of them.